Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language, by (Mark) Feng Teng

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Recently, researchers and practitioners have become interested in autonomy, identity, and agency, as they are crucial for engaging learners by considering their language learning needs and social situations. Autonomy, agency, identity and motivation encourage learners to use different opportunities to learn the language skills inside and outside the classrooms that help them with language development (Benson 2006; Boxer and Cortés-Conde 2000; Kemp 2009). They are interwoven with each other and important to students' independent action, which is crucial for learning (Kalaja et al. 2016).

The reviewed volume entitled *Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language* was published in 2019 by Springer in order to help readers understand the three interrelated issues based on theoretical and research findings and to clearly indicate the challenges that these issues pose to EFL teaching and learning. The volume is composed into eight chapters.

The introduction elucidates the changes within the landscape of teaching and learning in an EFL context. Thus, it is mentioned that it is important to consider learners' autonomy, agency and identity in the language teaching and learning landscape. The author claims that although globalisation, the knowledge-based economy and the information age changed the learners' view, considering learners' autonomy, agency and identity encourages learners to participate actively in the learning process and decision making (what to learn and how to learn).

The first chapter addresses issues encapsulated in its title: "Learner Autonomy: An Educational Goal of Teaching English as Foreign Language." It defines autonomy, its contribution to students' learning and associated features such as political development, social development, sociolinguistics, cognitive psychology metacognition and motivation.

The second chapter, "Teacher Autonomy: A Buzzword in Teaching English as a Foreign Language," sets out what is meant by teacher autonomy and how it is implemented in teacher education. According to the author, teachers have great responsibility to enhance students' autonomous learning. The author stresses that teachers have to consider students' independent learning needs. In addition, the author indicates how teachers can support the practice of autonomy and how to suppress constrains.

The main intent of Chapter 3, "Learner Identity in Foreign Language Education: Research Nexus and Implication," is to define learner identity and explain the interrelation between learner identity and language learning. The author also explicates factors such as the relationship between teachers and students, learners' level of cognitive awareness, a situated institutional system of learners and hidden conventional practices that affect learners' identity.

The fourth chapter, "Teacher Identity in Foreign Language Education: From the Perspective of Teacher Autonomy, Communities of Practice, and Affordances," introduces the importance of teacher identity, autonomy and community practice to construct a teacher's identity. In addition, the author claims that affordances are highly interrelated with teacher autonomy and identity. The author explicates that an affordance is an opportunity for learning that the learners perceive within the community (p. 55).

The fifth chapter, "The Complexity of Learner Agency and Teacher Agency in Foreign Language Education," elaborates how much both teachers' and students' agencies contribute to foreign language education. According to the author, learners have the capability to improve their pre-existing state of affairs or knowledge, and this could be developed through learner-centeredness and the autonomy that learners have to be active agents in the learning process and through active interactive processes between learners and their learning contexts. Moreover, the author discusses the complexity of teacher agency and adopting agentive behaviours in learning a foreign language education. Finally, the author reflects that teachers' professional agency can play an important role in shaping their practice in teaching.

The sixth chapter discusses "The Interrelationship of (Teacher) Autonomy, (Teacher) Agency and (Teacher) Identity in Foreign Language Education." The author asserts that identity, autonomy and agency are inseparable entities in foreign language education, and he tries to show their interrelation based on studies. The author claims that teachers' autonomous teaching and learning are constrained by school and curriculum-related

factors. Moreover, the author stresses that teacher autonomy empowers teacher engagement with teaching and curriculum design in different contexts.

The seventh chapter is titled "To Be or Not to Be an 'Old English Lecturer': A Social Identity Theory Perspective." First the author presents the context of EFL in China. Second, the author explains social identity theory and its importance to enhancing self-concepts and its linkage to identity. In addition, the author provides a case study using social identity theory applied to the context of EFL in China. The last chapter discusses "How EFL Students Learn English: From the Perspective of Identity Continuity and Identity Change." In the abstract the author claims that the existing research paid little attention to the mutual relationship between identity continuity and change and learning EFL.

I would recommend this informative and practical volume to EFL teachers, researchers and EFL students who are interested in dealing with autonomy, agency and identity. The book is research-based, and the author tried to fill the gap that exists in the teaching English as a foreign language context. The chapters start with clear and informative abstracts and there are reflections at the end of most of the chapters. Besides, the author uses tables and figures to elaborate and explain ideas easily to the reader. More importantly, he provides references at the end of each chapter. These make the book one of the favoured reference materials on this issue.

In spite of this, the author does not cover issues such as how to consider autonomy, agency and identity in syllabus design, material writing, and assessment in an EFL context. They are an integral part of language teaching. Though the author suggests the negotiation syllabus approach, he does not explain it in detail since a top-down syllabus approach is commonly practised in EFL contexts, and this affects autonomy, identity and agency in the language classroom. Despite this shortcoming, the book raises theoretical and practical issues that characterise EFL education concisely and comprehensively. Thus, I can say the author achieves his purpose and the book can make a practical contribution to teacher education and students' learning in EFL contexts.

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